

**October 9, 2009**

**Weekly Update: H1N1 – A New Kind of Flu – What You Need to Know!**

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**H1N1 Vaccine News**

Our first shipment of 600 doses of FluMist H1N1 vaccine should arrive by the middle of next week. Another 500 doses of FluMist and 500 doses of the more typical shot version of H1N1 vaccine have been ordered. We are informed weekly by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), via the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), how many doses and what type we can order.

**How do I know when and where it is available and who can be immunized?**

Beginning next week, as H1N1 vaccine begins to arrive, we will publicize what vaccine is available, when and where it is available, and who it is available for. Initially, all H1N1 vaccine for Riley County will come to the health department. As supply becomes more available, we will send some to local providers who have requested to help provide this vaccine. We will announce who these providers are and what supply they have. We anticipate supply to start and stop numerous times and will notify the public as this occurs through the following channels:

- 1) [www.rileycountyks.gov](http://www.rileycountyks.gov) look for "H1N1 Local Info"
- 2) Press releases to the Manhattan Mercury and Manhattan Broadcasting (B-104, 1350-KMAN, 101.5 K-Rock) and other media sources as requested.
- 3) Recorded message on the phone at the health department: 776-4779, extension 297

**Who can get FluMist?**

KDHE has applied FluMist's appropriate population information to the CDC's highest risk population recommendations and determined that FluMist should first be offered to two groups:

- 1) Health care workers who have direct contact with persons who may be infected. These health care workers must be no older than 49 years and cannot be pregnant or have any health problems.
- 2) Children with no health problems between the ages of **2 and 9** years. Children younger than 10 years of age need two doses, four weeks apart, of the vaccine, so it is important to get them vaccinated as soon as possible.

The health department and all providers will comply with these guidelines. Keep in mind that the guidelines will change as more and different types of vaccine become available.

**When and Where will H1N1 Vaccine be Available?** When any H1N1 vaccine arrives, we will hold a clinic at the health department at a time according to this schedule: Mondays – Thursdays 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM and Fridays 7:00 AM – 8:30 AM. Clinic times are dependent upon supply. If supply continues, those in line by clinic closing time will be served that day. These clinics are only intended for H1N1 vaccinations, not seasonal flu vaccinations.

**Cost** – H1N1 vaccine will be provided free of charge by all providers. Private providers may charge administration fees. The health department will bill insurance for administrative fees but individuals will not be charged. Persons without insurance coverage will not be charged at the health department. It is our goal to vaccinate all who need it, regardless of ability to pay.

**Vaccine Consent Forms** are being made available throughout the community, at doctor's offices, and websites such as the health department's at [www.rileycountyks.gov](http://www.rileycountyks.gov). **Completing consent forms before coming to a vaccination clinic will speed the process up considerably.**

**Seasonal Flu** – We are currently out of seasonal flu vaccine but do expect another 500 doses to arrive soon. We will announce availability of seasonal flu vaccine on our phone and will have it available during our regular hours, not at the special H1N1 late afternoon and early morning clinics.

### **Vaccine Safety**

Clinical trials conducted by the National Institutes of Health and the vaccine manufacturers have shown that the new H1N1 vaccine is both safe and effective. The FDA has licensed it. There have been no safety shortcuts.

It is produced exactly the same way the seasonal flu vaccine is produced every year. It is simply a new virus strain. In fact, had H1N1 struck this country earlier than this spring, the H1N1 strain probably would have been included as part of this year's seasonal flu shot.

Millions of Americans get the seasonal flu vaccine each year without any problems. Still, understanding that some Americans have concerns about "new" vaccines, the National Institutes of Health and the vaccine manufacturers have conducted more rigorous tests on the H1N1 vaccine than they do on other flu vaccines, and there have been no red flags from these clinical trials.

The world's top doctors and scientists believe the risk of H1N1 flu, especially for pregnant women, children, and people with underlying health conditions, is higher than any risk that might come from the H1N1 vaccine.

For further information please contact the health department or go to [www.rileycountyks.gov](http://www.rileycountyks.gov) or [www.kdheks.gov/H1N1](http://www.kdheks.gov/H1N1).